

Jordan form

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Theorem. (Jordan Form for T) There exists a basis \mathcal{B} for \mathbb{V} such that the matrix $A = {}_{\mathcal{B}}[T]_{\mathcal{B}}$ has the “block” diagonal form

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} J_{d_1}(\lambda_{i_1}) & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & J_{d_2}(\lambda_{i_2}) & & 0 \\ \vdots & & & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & J_{d_k}(\lambda_{i_k}) \end{bmatrix}$$

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where $J_d(\lambda)$ is a $d \times d$ upper triangular **Jordan block**:

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The Jordan form of a matrix is unique up to a permutation of the Jordan blocks. \square

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3×3 Jordan block and one 4×4 Jordan block. Both Jordan blocks correspond to e-value 0. The characteristic polynomial for this matrix is $(\lambda - 0)^7 = \lambda^7$. This is also the characteristic polynomial for the 7×7 zero matrix. The two matrices are not similar, since they have different ranks. (5 versus 0.)

- $$\begin{bmatrix} J_2(1) & 0 \\ 0 & J_2(3) \end{bmatrix} = \left[\begin{array}{cc|cc} 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ \hline 0 & 0 & 3 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 3 \end{array} \right]$$

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Assume that A is a matrix over \mathbb{F} , and that its Jordan form over $\overline{\mathbb{F}}$ is

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$$C^{-1}AC = \begin{bmatrix} D_{d_1}(\lambda_{i_1}) & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & D_{d_2}(\lambda_{i_2}) & & 0 \\ \vdots & & & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & D_{d_k}(\lambda_{i_k}) \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} N_{d_1} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & N_{d_2} & & 0 \\ \vdots & & & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & N_{d_k} \end{bmatrix} = D + N$$

where $DN = ND$.

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so $\binom{n}{1} \mathcal{D}^{n-1} \mathcal{N} = \mathbf{0}$. Since $\chi_{\mathcal{D}} = \chi_A$, and A is invertible, \mathcal{D}^{n-1} is invertible.

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Exercise. Suppose that A is a matrix with entries in \mathbb{Q} that has finite multiplicative order. ($A^n = I$ for some n .) Show that A is diagonalizable over \mathbb{C} .

Solution 1. Write $A = \mathcal{D} + \mathcal{N}$ be the abstract Jordan decomposition of A . By the binomial theorem (which holds, since $\mathcal{D}\mathcal{N} = \mathcal{N}\mathcal{D}$),

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- The Jordan form of small-dimension matrices can be determined by χ_A and rank calculations. (E.g., no ambiguity up to 3×3 .)